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FROM THE CABIN

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# THE WHITE HOUSE.

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AN ADDRESS

AT THE OBSEQUIES OF THE LATE

## PRESIDENT LINCOLN,

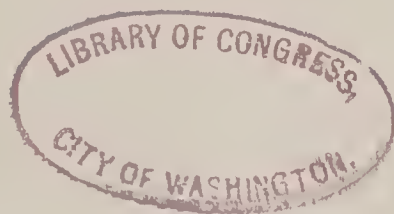
BY REV. J. TANSY,

OF NEW HARMONY, IND.

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## ADDRESS.

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We have met, to-day, in obedience to a call from our national authorities, to pay a last tribute of respect to the memory of our beloved Chief Magistrate, ABRAHAM LINCOLN, who was assassinated in Ford's Theatre, in Washington City, April 13th, 1865. None of us, nor the nation, have ever experienced so sad a bereavement. Great men have fallen in our country before; twice death has taken from us our Chief Magistrate; Washington, and the Fathers of our Country, have been removed by death; but none of these events carried so much sadness and gloom to the hearts and homes of the American people, as the death of ABRAHAM LINCOLN. And, on the present occasion, it is very fit, that we review the life and character of the illustrious personage, whose funeral ceremonies we have met to celebrate. And we notice—

12  I. HIS BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD.—He was born February 12, 1809, in Hardin county, Kentucky. His parents were very poor, but respectable. He was started to an A, B, C, school at the age of seven. His mother, like the mothers of Washington and Adams, was a religious woman; and early instilled into the mind and heart of her child,

had much to do in the formation of his character. All told, he was not in school more than one year, and this, a few weeks at a time, with long intervals between. I do not say that he finished his studies when he quit school; he was a student all his life.

As to his manner of study, a well authenticated anecdote, related by himself to a clergyman of Troy, New York, and published in the "Independent," will illustrate. During the Presidential campaign of 1856, he made a speech in New York City, said, at the time, to have been one of the best political efforts ever made in that city. As he was returning home, the clergyman, also on his way home, and in the same coach, entered into conversation with Mr. LINCOLN. During the course of the conversation the clergyman referred to the speech of the day before, and was unsparing in his praise. Said Mr. *Lincoln*, "do you really think that I made a good speech yesterday?"

"I do," replied the clergyman, "and I am not alone in the opinion; almost every one that heard it, pronounced it a *masterly effort*. And now, pray tell me the secret of your *wonderful success*. I presume that you are not an educated man, *i. e.* you have never graduated from any college."

"No, sir, I am not a graduate from college, nor did I ever see inside of a college until since I have been married! But to answer your question, when I concluded to study law, and after I had become a lawyer's clerk, and began 'reading,' I frequently came across the word *demonstrate*. I could not understand it. I asked *myself* what *is demonstrate*? I could not answer the question! The books did not tell me! I turned to the dictionaries—I consulted Johnson and Webster, and others.

I found there that to *demonstrate* means ‘to show or prove to be certain beyond a doubt.’ This did not satisfy me. I threw aside my law books until I could learn to *demonstrate*. I took up *Euclid* and studied until I could solve most of the problems in five books at sight! Then I thought I could demonstrate, and returned to my law.”

This is a feat that very few men have performed. Some of you have gone through a collegiate course. Could your Professors of Mathematics do it? They could not. Very few men have been endowed with such powers of concentration. His powers of memory were as extraordinary as his powers of concentration. When but eleven years old he committed to memory Esop’s Fables. And, during his boyhood, the pioneer preachers found their way into the wilderness as heralds of civilization. They visited the part of the country where the cabin of the elder Mr. Lincoln was situate. On the Monday morning following their visits, young Lincoln would mount a stump or log, and regale his school-fellows with the sermon of the previous day! Very few *men* have been able to do this. It is said of the celebrated Dr. Chalmers, that when a boy, he was in the habit of doing the same thing. Others, by careful cultivation of memory, have, in mature manhood, been able to do it ; but I do not now know of any other instance on record, of the same kind in a boy! These are some of the incidents of the boyhood of this remarkable man.

II. HIS CHARACTER—*He was Honest.*—This is conceded by all men of all parties. I will give here an incident or two of his boyhood, similar to the one told of Washington and his hatchet. His schoolmaster had a buck’s horn nailed to the side of his house. Young



Lincoln in passing saw it, and thought that it would be a nice place to perform a gymnastic feat. And, accordingly, he tried it. In the performance of the feat, he unfortunately broke the buckshorn from its fastenings. The master finding it out, asked who was the author of the mischief. Young Lincoln replied quickly and frankly :

“I did it sir. I did it swinging upon it. I did not know that it would break, or I would not have done it.”

Here was an exhibition of that love of truth and honesty, that shone so brightly in every act of his after life. You have all heard of the borrowed book : how it got wet and damaged by the storm, and how he cut corn tops three day's to pay for it !

“Honest Abe,” was the appellation he received when a boy, and throughout an eventful life, he retained the character. The temptations and cheateries of the law could not bend him. The excitements and corruptions of politics could not swerve him. He lived and died, that noblest work of God, “an honest man.”

*He was Kind.*—He possessed almost a womanly tenderness. His heart never closed against suffering and distress. He was ever ready to respond to calls for the wants and woes of others, and he responded not in words of sympathy alone, but acts and means relieved their necessities.

An incident is related of him when a young man, that illustrates the kindness of his heart. He had been invited to a house-raising about fourteen miles from home. On his return, he found a man lying in the ditch drunk. The weather was cold, and death would have ended that drunkard's career, in the ditch, ere midnight, had he not been



relieved. Young Lincoln sent word to his mother that he would not be at home until morning, and then took up the drunken man and carried him to a place of safety, remained by him all night, and in the morning, set him on his horse and sent him on his way in safety. A few weeks before his death a prominent secessionist, of Kentucky, wrote to him asking permission for his son, who was in the rebel army, to come home, and received for an answer: "tell your son to come home, take the oath, and be a good boy!" If he had a fault, it grew out of his kindness of heart. It often tempted him to snatch the victim from the hand of Justice.

*He had an inflexible will.*—"I will try," was his motto, and for him to try was equivalent to success. *Failure* was blotted from his vocabulary. He would accomplish anything, short of an impossibility. *He was a man of stern integrity.* A promise once given, he was sure to perform. An obligation once made, he never forgot. "His word was as good as his bond." *He had a keen sense of the right.* In short, all that was noble, and good, shone prominently in his character. He was temperate, patient, affable, gentle, genial, and kind. Prosperity did not inflate him with vanity. Honors did not make him a bigot. Power, and glory, did not dazzle or corrupt him. He was, when standing where other men have only dared to look, on the heights of fame, the same kind hearted, unassuming, honest, humble man, that he was when struggling with hardships and poverty. He was as strictly honest in public life as he was when clerk in the store and post-office, in the little town of West Salem, in Illinois. He held the wheel of the ship of State, in the stormy times of the rebellion

with the same manly firmness and integrity that he did the oars of his employer's flat-boat, on the waters of the Mississippi. No single act of fraud, injustice, violence, or crime, has ever been attributed to him. He has had his calumniators. But they were either traitors themselves, or in sympathy with, or in the employment of, traitors—men who know not how to admire a noble man, or the value of a virtuous act. And when such men are forgotten, or branded as Arnold and Cain, or only live in memory, execrable, he will live on, his character growing brighter and brighter. Or when a black monument, representing Shame exulting over Virtue, may be erected to commemorate their deeds, his sun will not have reached its zenith! *His* fame lives, grounded on truth, virtue, and honor. His is a *living* character. There are some characters that *die*, but Abraham Lincoln's is one that *lives*. His virtues are deathless; his laurels fadeless; his is an undying fame.

III. HIS CONNECTION WITH THE GREAT EVENTS TRANSPIRING AROUND US.—Ever since man, in the Garden of Eden, wrenched the reigns of government from the hands of Jehovah, and attempted to govern himself, the solution of the problem of self-government has occupied the greatest minds of earth. Tyrants have said, "man cannot govern himself." Self-conceited aristocrats have proclaimed, "he is incapable;" and even republicans have doubted his capacity. But our Fathers thought differently, and the events of the past four years show their reasoning correct. The problem has been demonstrated beyond a doubt. Man is capable of self-government. Mr. Lincoln's connection with the events that demonstrated the problem, alone, would give him prominence in the history

of the times. But his was not a spectator's part. He was, rather, the hero of the greatest drama of history. Each scene, each event, in the demonstration of the grand contest bore the impress of his genius and power.

When inaugurated, States were seceding, rebels were proud, defiant and confident; the treasury empty, the fleet scattered to the four points of the compass; the army disorganized, the arsenals empty or in the hands of traitors; the nation, in wonder and fear, looked on. Monarchists of the Old World laughed a demoniac laugh, and said; "See, their fabric of Republicanism is tumbling to the ground!" The boldest were faint-hearted and doubting. The darkest hour that has lowered over our destiny since the days of "'76" hung over, ~~was~~ the morning of March 4, 1861. A general gloom, like a funeral pall, shrouded our destiny, and filled all hearts with fear. Did I say all hearts? He alone was calm—*He* seemed to feel no fear, to know no doubt. Taking upon himself the solemn obligations to discharge faithfully the duties of his office, and calling God to witness, in His strength, he set himself energetically to work to save his country from ruin. Calmly, and dispassionately, he surveyed the field; sternly, and unflinching he looked danger in the face, and skillfully made his preparations to meet it. He surrounded himself with able counsellors; the best talent and wisdom of the land filled places of trust in the Cabinet and camp. But the nation looked to *him*—depended upon him. Slavery had thrown down the gauntlet to Liberty. He took it up. The contest was begun. The world, astonished at the desperation of the rencounter, stood still and looked on. Tyrants and aristocrats prayed for defeat; liberals, everywhere hoped,



yet feared, for success. But with the battle cry of *Freedom* on his lips, and his great soul animated with the greatness of the stake, he fought the "good fight." After four years of superhuman toil, and labor, of prayer, anxiety and anguish, he won the victory, reached the goal, was crowned with fadeless laurels to—*die*.

*The abolition of slavery*, is another of the *mighty* events of the times with which he was intimately connected. An antagonism to human slavery was instilled into his soul when but a boy by his parents. "It grew with growth, and strengthened with his strength," and matured with his maturity, and eventually, he sealed with his blood his devotion to human liberty, and his hatred to slavery. Some of you will remember his remarkable words, in one of his speeches, when of the slave power, as early as 1859, he said :

"Broken by it, I too, may be; bow to it, I never will. The probability that we may fail in the struggle ought not to deter us from the support of a cause which I deem just; it shall not deter me. If ever I feel the soul within me expand to those dimensions not wholly unworthy of its Almighty architect, it is when I contemplate the cause of my country, deserted by all the world besides, and I standing up boldly and alone, and hurling defiance at her victorious oppressors. Here, without contemplating consequences, before High Heaven, and in the face of the world, I swear eternal fidelity to the just cause, as I deem it, of the land of my life, my liberty, my love."

When Mr. LINCOLN came into office, he found four millions of human beings in bondage. Rebels and traitors



had gone to war to rivet more firmly the manacles upon the slave. He said :

“ We will save the Union *with* slavery if we can ; if we cannot, without it. The Union must be saved at all hazards.”

In the course of the demonstration of the problem of self-government, it became evident that slavery must be abolished. With characteristic firmness and fearlessness, he took hold of their fetters and burst them asunder, and bade the slave go free. The carpings of narrow minded, prejudiced persons, the love of friends, the fear of foes, could not deter him. He found slavery in the way to peace and safety, and it *must be* removed. And, remove it he did. And, we may now sing without a lie on our lips :

“ The Star spangled banner, O long may it wave,  
O'er the land of the *free*, and the *home* of the *brave*.”

Like Napoleon, he, in a measure, gave the impress of his own character to the times. And, while Christianity and philanthropy have places in the history of the world, and while virtue is cherished and loved by men and angels, and while noble deeds are honored in heaven and in earth, his name and deeds will not be forgotten. Cincinnatus, at the call of his countrymen, twice left his plough and saved Rome from destruction. Horatio, another noble Roman, with two others, defended the narrow pass against the Tuscan band, until the bridge over the Tiber could be broken down. The bridge went down, cutting off all hope of escape, but Rome was saved ! Leonidas, with his three hundred Spartans, blocked the pass of Thermopylæ against the minions of Persia until Greece could organize ! These are some of the world's roll of honor. Another and

brighter name has been added to the list. Achilles and Hercules live in fabled history and song—LINCOLN on the pages of the grandest history of time.

WE NOW COMPARE HIS CHARACTER WITH OTHER GREAT MEN OF THE WORLD.—Cincinnatus, a noble Roman, we have said, twice left his quiet home and domestic peace to save his country from ruin. But Cincinnatus was born of Patrician parents, and had all the advantages that wealth and the best masters could afford. Julius Cæsar had acquired a world-wide reputation as General of the Roman armies of the West. But power tempted him to the overthrow of his country's government. Peter the Great, of Russia, is, perhaps, the brightest name on the *kingly* roll; but he was a tyrant.

Among all the lustrous names that shine in the history of the past, none have reached the highest station, possible for man to reach, with virtue's robes about them so pure and spotless, as ABRAHAM LINCOLN. Cromwell, unaided, by dint of energy, came up from the lowest walks of life, to absolute power and rule in England. But Power made him drunk. He took upon himself the title of Dictator, became a bigot, ruled with the rod of a despot, flung to the winds his fame, and infamy has set her mark on him for all time to come. And, whatever may be said of the virtues of Napoleon—and they are many—history has written him Egotist and Tyrant. But we see ABRAHAM LINCOLN, born in a hovel where poverty reigned supreme, his hands hardened to toil, and his visage bronzed by the sun, struggling with *more* than herculean energy and power against the difficulties that environed him; and rising, unaided, by his own virtues, and standing without

giddiness, pride or hauteur, upon dazzling heights where other men have only dared to look, unscathed by any vice. As humble and merciful in the hour of triumph and greatest glory, as he was firm and unyielding in adversity and storm. Thank God for giving us ABRAHAM LINCOLN in the hour of our national peril and calamity! And, thank God! we can point to him, as pure and spotless in life and character! Thank God, he is *ours*. His name, his character, his virtues, his fame, *all* ours—ours to cherish, to emulate, to teach our children to teach their children to cherish and emulate.

Washington was *great*, NOBLE, GRAND in his character. A halo no less lustrous clusters round the name of LINCOLN. England had her Alfred the Great, and Prince of Orange; Prussia, her Frederick the Great; France, her Charlemagne and Napoleon; Spain, her Charles the Fifth, and Russia, her Peter the Great; but high over all these masters and conquerors of the Old World, stands in simple, yet majestic grandeur, the name of our LINCOLN.

Again, thank God! for giving us ABRAHAM LINCOLN in the hour of the nation's peril and calamity; and, thank God, we can point to him as pure and spotless!

We close by a few

GENERAL REMARKS.—But now he has gone from us. Deeds, memory and hope are all that remain; all else has fled. Just as he had reached the goal for which he had so long toiled and prayed, he was stricken down by the assassin. Like Moses, he was permitted to lead his people to the borders of the expected inheritance; like him, he was permitted to look from heights on the promised rest, and then—*die*. He was murdered upon the execution of an act



of unexampled clemency, which dismissed the armed leaders of the rebellion to their homes, and showed the political conspirators of it that no vengeance from us would follow their crimes, or prevent their return to peace and equal rights in the country they had deluged in blood.

In the excitement of the terrible provocations his leniency to the South was esteemed by his friends his chief fault. So good, and kind, and tender, and merciful an intercessor and judge has the Southern rebellion murdered in the very act of forgiveness! While the father opened his arms to receive back the Southern Prodigal, he rushed upon him, and stabbed him, as if to drive all mercy from the hearts of men, and leave, henceforth, stern justice, and righteous vengeance, to unmitigated sway.

He has gone from us. From the heights of glory he had climbed so high—he has faded into HEAVEN. A nation follows his bier as chief mourner, for a loss that is irreparable. Tread lightly, as his ashes go to rest. “Earth to earth, *ashes to ashes*, DUST TO DUST,” fall heavily on the ears of a stricken and weeping people, as his body is consigned to the grave, there to rest until the general resurrection of the dead at the last day. Speak softly. All hearts are wrung with grief. Weep on, O, Sons and Daughters of Columbia, tears are fit tributes to the memory of him whom we so loved. Weep on, but weep not in utter abandonment. Earth has lost her noblest benefactor, but the Saviour, the pure and redeemed in heaven, have received him. Let us weep, but not hopelessly. You have heard of a

———“Sun bright clime,  
Where the eye is fire, and the heart is flame.”



he awaits us there—in heaven—where no assassin can ever enter. For awhile we bid him adieu, with hope shining, ever shining, upon the dark portals of his tomb. Then, for awhile, farewell to the Noble, the Sage, the Patriot, the Brave. Thou art gone—

“Gone to the grave, but we will not deplore thee,  
Though sorrow and darkness encompass the tomb,  
The Saviour has passed through its portals before thee,  
And the lamp of his love, is thy guide through its gloom.”

He has fallen, “a great and good man, a martyr to his country; but not till he had lived through all its years of danger and terrible trial and despondency, to see its triumph assured, and the bright dawn of peace at home and the establishment of his country’s dignity and power abroad. He was identified with all its danger and suffering. In its darkest hours he never despaired for his country, or abated a particle of its sovereignty or dignity. In the gloom of military failure he decreed that the contest should, henceforth, be the restoration of the nation upon the foundation of justice to all men. He struck a blow at the root of the most powerful wrong that ever ruled a people. Against all the influence of political weakness, border compromises, and of the depressions by the fortunes of war, and the appalling magnitude of the contest, he steadily refused to modify, or withdraw that decree of liberty, or compromise his faith given to that liberated people.

He has fallen; but in a blaze of glory.

\* \* “~~Saw~~ the old eagle to die at the sun!

Lies he stiff with spread wings at the goal he had won!

Are there spirits more blest than the plant of Even,

Who mount to their zenith, then melt into Heaven—

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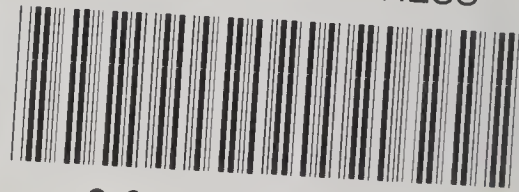








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